THE PLOUGH BOY.

AND JOURNAL OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

BY SOLOMON SOUTHWICK.

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap."—BUT—"He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread."—*Ecclesiastes*

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ORIGINAL.

FOR THE PLOUGH BOY.

On the Culture of Hemp.

This plant flourishes most in a mellow dry soil, and the richer the better. It affords little or no profit in lands of ordinary fertility. In soils naturally adapted to its culture, or in those sufficiently manured, it is one of the surest and most profitable crops, as the plant is subject to no disease, nor is it liable to be annoyed by any insect; drouths do not sensibly affect its growth, and it is in no danger of being destroyed by cattle. From two to three bushels of seed are requisite to the acre; two where the soil is not the richest, and from that allowance up to three in those capable of affording greater products. The seed must be of the year next preceding, as it quickly loses its germinative powers. A ton of hemp, when dressed, may be raised from two acres of land of the highest fertility; but in the bog meadows of Orange county, in this state, where the culture of the crop is mostly attended to, the usual product is about a ton from four acres. There, the crop is cultivated several years successively on the same lands. Whether the manuring of those lands with upland earths, particularly those of a sandy composition, has ever been put into practical operation, I have not understood; but it is believed that no manure, so cheaply afforded, will produce equal effects, on lands of that description. But as uplands, or those of alluvial formation, are the soils to which cultivators will be found almost exclusively restricted in the culture of the crop, except in that county, I shall confine myself more particularly to its culture in soils of those descriptions.

Where the land is to be sufficiently enriched by fresh barn-yard manure, the better way perhaps is to break up the ground in the fall; in the spring following cart on the dung, say, at the rate of fifty loads to the acre; plough this under, with a deep furrow, and cultivate the ground, for that season, with some hoed crop; the next spring mellow the ground effectually with the plough, lay the furrows level with the harrow; and then it will be fit for the reception of the seed for the crop of hemp, which is to be sown broadcast. The sowing one half of the allowance of seed one way, and the other half crosswise, is advisable, for the purpose of its being more evenly applied. The seed should be lightly covered, and as evenly as possible, in order that all the young plants may have an equal start for their future growth; for if some happen to come up too late, they will be kept down by the predominance which the earlier started plants acquire. It is believed that in this crop, as in almost every other, material benefit is to be derived from soaking the seed in a solution, not too strong, of common salt, or of salt petre, or in a moderate lye of wood ashes, and then rolling the seed in gypsum, before sowing. A plentiful application of gypsum to the crop after it is sown, is also by all means advisable, if the soil is suited to that manure. It should also be here observed, that if any manures, of the nature of composts, are to be applied, for the additional growth of the crop, they should be spread on the ground before the first ploughing, in order that they may be properly mixed with the soil previous to the sowing. The seed should be sown about as early in the spring as that of flax, and in such case the crop will be ready to harvest about the beginning of August, though doubtless earlier or later, according to the climate. The proper time for harvesting is to be known by the falling of the flowers, and the withering of the leaves.

The male plants bear the flowers, and the female the seed. A sufficiency of the latter are to be left for seed, and these will require about five or six weeks further time to ripen, the ripeness being known by the seeds turning brown. They may be beat off the stalks, when dried, by a gentle beating, or they may be taken off by a sort of coarse wooden comb, similar to that which may be, in like manner, used for gathering the seed of flax. The female hemp, after having thus stood to ripen, requires a longer time to rot than the male, and is harsher when dressed. The better way probably is to sow some hemp thinly by itself for seed, and then the rest of the crop may be all harvested together, which is the next operation.

In the meadows of Orange county the crop is cut close to the earth, by a sort of scythe, made for the purpose. The usual practice however is, to pull it, in the manner of pulling flax, and the swarth taken must be wide enough to spread the hemp behind, as the work advances. When the hemp has lain a sufficient time to dry, which, in good weather, will be about a week, it is to be gathered in sheaves, bound with straw, and then carefully stacked up, so as to be kept in a dry situation. Such is the method practised in Orange county, and the rotting of the crop is chiefly performed in winter. For this purpose the hemp is spread out on the snow, commonly about Christmas, and in this situation it lies covered by succeeding snows, till it is found sufficiently rotted in the succeeding spring, after the snows have disappeared. Its proper degree of rotting is to be ascertained by trial, in a manner similar to that which is usual with regard to flax. But the crop may be rotted in the fall; in a manner similar to that commonly practised for rotting flax, or like that crop, it may be water-rotted. Where this latter operation is resorted to, the hemp should be sunk completely under the water, and if it be stagnant the hemp should be turned upside down, when about half rotted, otherwise, from the greater degree of heat on the surface of such waters than below, the upper part will be rotted before the under. Where a running stream of water is to be used for the purpose, and the current somewhat brisk, it is advisable to lay the hemp lengthways across the stream, to prevent any wastage of the coat of the stalks, by the constant friction of the passing waters.—When hemp is sufficiently water-rotted, a small handful may be pulled asunder, the wet coat of the stalks being then very tender.

The advantage of water-rotting and winter-rotting seems to be, principally, that either of these processes are calculated to blacken the coat of the hemp much less than when the crop is rotted in the fall; and it should also be observed that the warmer the weather, or the earlier in the fall the crop is rotted, the blacker the coat will be. The same is the case in regard to flax.

After rotting, the crop is to be set up in small shooks, and when sufficiently dry, it is to be broken with a coarse break; then carried to the barn to be broken finer with the flax break; after which it is to be dressed, in the manner of flax, but more gently, as it will waste with hard

ea ing. If the hemp, when broken, be too long for dressing, it may be cut in the middle without lessening the value of the article.

The improved method of rotting and cleaning hemp, as communicated by M. Bralle, is now to be mentioned, and is as follows: Put 50 lbs. of hemp, in the stalk, in a vessel filled with water, sufficient to cover the hemp, and previously heated as high as 200 degrees of Fahrenheit, and into which has been mixed one pound, at least, of good soft soap; take away the fire, and let the hemp remain in the vessel two hours; then take it out, and cover it with straw, so that it may cool gradually; the next day spread it evenly on a floor, and run a heavy roller over it several times, which serves to break it; spread it out on the grass for five or six days to bleach; then take it up, dry it, and clean it. By this management it is said that a fourth more of hemp may be obtained than when rotted in the usual way; the hemp is much softer, stronger, of better quality, and the process of cleaning is much less expensive.

To render this method of rotting and cleaning hemp profitable, it would seem necessary to make it a separate business, or that a number of cultivators should be tenants in common of an establishment of the kind, as it ought to be on a much larger scale than has just been mentioned. A wooden vessel may be used for the boiler, and the water may be heated by steam. Different quantities of hemp may, no doubt, be successively heated in the same water, making additions to it as this liquid evaporates, and also of suitable additions of soap. Perhaps lye of wood ashes would be found a substitute for the soap. Instead of the heavy roller just mentioned, perhaps the passing of the stalks, evenly laid, between two rollers, to be turned by a crank or otherwise, would be preferable; and after the bleaching and drying just mentioned, the hemp might be passed through another pair of rollers finely indented, which would serve as effectually for further breaking as the break used for flax, and would probably prove much more expeditious. Some miscellaneous remarks are further to be made.

The crop of hemp should be harvested as soon as it is fit for the purpose; otherwise, the male stalks will soon wither and blacken, after which the coat is of little value. Hemp may be made a substitute for flax for all common purposes, but in such case it must be softened by steaming it over boiling water or lye, and beating, after it is dried again. The common steam-boiler may be used for the purpose of steaming.

An excellent crop of wheat may be taken after a crop of hemp, and with very little expense. If the wheat appears to grow too luxuriantly in the spring, let it be pastured down, after it has attained the height of six or eight inches, after which it will grow with a stronger stalk, and yield a much greater product than it otherwise would have afforded. The eating off the crop should be when the ground is sufficiently dry, and it should be done as quick as possible. Mowing off the growth as closely as possible, will perhaps answer equally as well. In the second volume of the (former) agricultural society of this state, a case is reported by the late Mr. L'Hommedieu, of a small spot of ground, in his neighbourhood, having been very profusely manured with Manhadden fish, and then sown with rye. In the spring following, a flock of sheep broke in twice, and at each time eat the crop down close; the first time, when it had grown to the height of about 9 inches, the latter when it was about 6 inches high; but these circumstances only contributed to enable the crop to start again with a much thicker and stronger growth, and the result was that the spot yielded 16 bushels of rye, which was at the rate of 128 bushels to the acre; whereas, it was supposed that had not the crop been thus eaten down, it would all have lodged too soon to have afforded any product of consequence.

I have omitted any observations in regard to the late invented method of cleaning flax and hemp without rotting, as the accounts I have seen of the quantity which one hand can, in this way, clean in a day, differ so materially, that I can form no opinion of its utility, without further knowledge of the subject. J. N.

FOR THE PLOUGH BOY.

On the Culture of Hemp.

No. V.

MIDDLESEX, 4th January, 1821.

To Thomas Beals, Esq. Treasurer of the Ontario Agricultural Society.

DEAR SIR,

You will, no doubt, repent the request you made of me, to reduce my wandering ideas on the subject of hemp to writing; but you hav no escape from the consequences of your own hasty request. The scribling humour is upon me, and I must indulge it even at the expense of your patience. I have further to remark, that we want some light, valuable, and saleable staple, easily transported to market, adapted to our soil and climate, and easily converted into cash.—Such a staple, I am of opinion, will be found, if judicious and proper encouragement be given to the cultivation and preparation of hemp, in our western countries. Our soil and climate are peculiarly adapted to the production; the demand is almost unlimited even for home consumption, and for export to foreign markets, surely may be made equal to that of cotton. The moment we can compare in quality with foreign hemp, and supply the wants of our own commerce and navy, we drive the foreign article out of our market, and save to ourselves and our country, an immense sum of money which is annually sent abroad for supplies of this article. And when the impulse is given, and our labour and ingenuity directed to such an object, we shall not stop at the mere supply of our own wants, but shall in all human probability, compete with Russia in the European markets, in quality and price, for this staple of trade, and thus introduce and establish an agricultural staple equal in importance and value, (if not superior) to the cottons of the south; and by employing a proportion of our lands and labour in this object, we shall produce a market at home for our surplus grain and provisions; give a new and important impulse to our agricultural industry; enhance the value of our lands; and make money plenty in both pockets. All these are certainly desirable objects in the present state of our interior counties; we have literally nothing but potashes, which can be converted into cash. Our grain, pork, beef, butter, cheese, and whiskey, are valueless and utterly unconvertible, for the payment of debts, or to raise cash. Our lands are sunk and sinking in value, and universal distress and complaint prevail among us. And why? Is it not because we misapply our labour? Is it not because we have glutted the markets with provisions, and every other product of our present agricultural system? And still continue to buy our very bed cords and halters from Russia, and to spread Russian canvass on our commerce and navy? Paying out vast sums of money for articles which we can produce as good and as cheap as any other nation on earth, while the produce of our soil and labour is without market and without price.

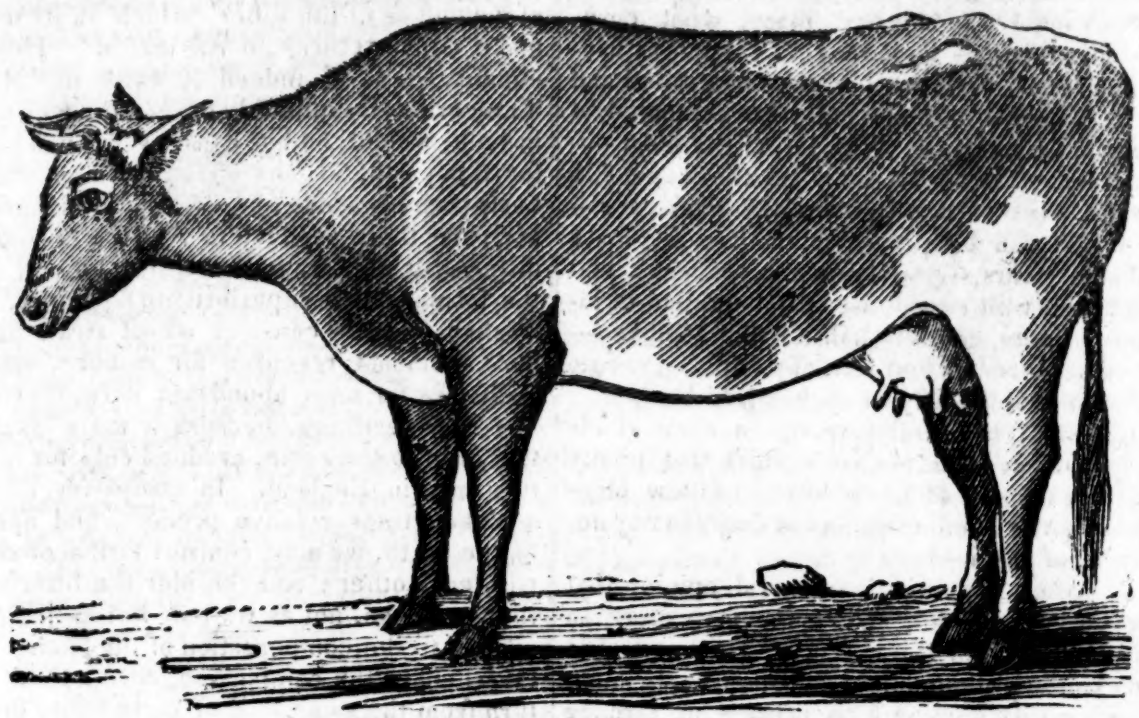
Is it not then important, is it not desirable, that our agricultural society should direct its influence to the introduction, encouragement, and establishment of a new and rich agricultural staple, calculated not only to save money in our country, but to bring into circulation among us vast sums from abroad?

Hitherto the convulsed state of Europe, and the consequent demand for our provisions abroad, and the rapid settlement of our western country have conspired to keep up the price of produce, and we have found it profitable to urge our lands in the production of grain and provisions. But the time has now arrived when we must compete in these articles under disadvantages too great to be surmounted. A change has become necessary in the objects of our agricultural economy and industry. Our grain and pork will no longer pay transportation to our distant markets, and the farmer toils in vain. Hemp and cattle appear to me to offer the richest and most permanent rewards to our agriculturists, and I hope our agricultural society will deem it expedient to encourage and promote by all their influence and patronage the establishment and perfection of the hemp culture among us.

AGRICOLA.

Holderness Cow.

We have at length the satisfaction of laying before our readers the following portrait and brief history of the cow lately imported from England by Mr. FEATHERSTONHAUGH, of Duanesburgh. We saw this animal while here, and were much pleased with her size, symmetry and gentleness. She was examined by several good judges, who all concurred in opinion, that a few such importations would greatly improve our breed of cattle, and enrich the agricultural interest.



THE HOLDERNESS COW,

Recently imported by Mr. G. W. Featherstonhaugh.

This cow is of that species of the *short horned* breed called the Holderness.

They are of a large size, but are particularly valued for the remarkable quantities of rich milk which they give. It is on this account that the breed prevails generally in the rich county of Middlesex, for the supply of the city of London. With a sufficient quanty of succulent food, and regular milking three times a day, they yield from forty to fifty quarts of milk. The animal of which the above is an imperfect representation, gave during an uncommon stormy passage of 48 days in the late winter months, a constant profusion of milk, and on her arrival at New-York, being much reduced in flesh, and her hide extremely wounded in many places by chafing against her pen, gave sixteen quarts at one milking. She remained two or three days in the city of Albany, and was inspected by numerous persons, amongst whom were some of the most respectable butchers of the place.

They were unanimously of opinion that she was the most remarkable animal they had ever seen. From the centre of her horns, to the end of her buttocks she measures seven feet and a half, and two feet three inches across her hips. Her hide is mellow to the feet, and perfectly silky without any coarse hairs. Her head and neck are small and remarkably graceful, her ears uncommonly large and smooth, accompanied with a singular transparency. Her carcase is well barrelled out and compact: her legs and tail corresponding in fineness to her head and neck. The butchers who inspected her observed that they never saw any animal with so little offal. She was judged to weigh twelve hundred if in condition. She was selected from the first stock in England, and is with calf by a descendant of the famous bull Comet, who sold for a thousand guineas. She is at present removed to the farm of the proprietor in Duanesburgh, who expects a bull of the same breed in the course of the spring.

FOR THE PLOUGH BOY.

Garden Hoe.

GAINES, (*Genesee co.*) Feb. 2, 1821.

MR. SOUTHWICK,

In perusing the 34th number of the 2d volume of *The Plough Boy*, I observed, in the course of Mr. HOPKINS's address to the Agricultural Society of this county, that he is very much in favour of the *Flax Comb*. I had intended to have explained more fully on the subject of cleaning flax-seed, and also of the many ways of making and using the comb; but as Mr. Hopkins has been very explicit on that head, I shall not go into detail. I shall only add that I did not expect any one to try its utility, owing to its simplicity. I reduced it to its most simple form in order that it might come within the reach of every farmer, that this country might e'er long be rid of foul seed, so detrimental to the raising of that necessary article—*Flax*. The comb which I have in use is made with iron teeth, which wear longer than those of wood. It is not only valuable for flax, but it answers an excellent purpose for taking off the seed from broom corn.

I cannot close this article without recommending one more very valuable instrument in husbandry; and since my simple *Flax Comb* has found one able advocate, I will venture to describe an instrument more simple, yet not less valuable to the agricultural interest: it is a *Garden Hoe*. There are many kinds of garden hoes in use, but none deserving more attention than the one I intend to describe; for none answers the purpose so completely, and none can be made with less expense—the price is barely one shilling. A piece of iron drawn out 4 5 or 6 inches long—1 1-2 or 2 inches wide at the end next to the handle, with rather an oval taper, to a point—very thin and sharp at the edges, with a shank standing nearly at right angles or rather inclining inward to work easy; drive the shank into a handle with a ferrel on the end, and put a small key through to hold it on; this is better than an eye, like other hoes and much cheaper. The handle should be long enough to reach across the beds and the operator stand erect.

If you once get one made right and learn to use it which is very simple, you will never pull another weed with your fingers; there is no plant so small but that it will take out the weeds with the greatest facility; you may make an onion bed in the hardest clay ground with this hoe, if it be necessary, by using the point.—When you have mellow ground lay it down side ways, and you may hoe as fast as with a common hoe. It is an excellent tool for weeding corn.—Dont let this pass untryed.

Yours respectfully,
J. W. AVERILL.

FOR THE PLOUGH BOY.

To prevent the ravages of the Turnip Fly.

Three methods have lately been discovered, each of which are said to be effectual.—1st method: Strew a little fresh slacked lime over the young plants, as soon as they are well above ground, or as soon as you perceive the fly beginning to attack them. 2d. Sow a sufficient proportion of radish seed with those of the turnip, in which case the fly will feed entirely on the radish plants, being fondest of them, and will leave the turnip unmolested. 3d. Soak the seed in train or fish oil, mixed with sulphur, for about 20 hours, and then drain off the oil and roll the seed in gypsum, ashes, or lime. The oil assists the vegetation of the seed, and, together with the sulphur, impregnates the plants so strongly that no insect will touch them till they are well leafed out.

FOR THE PLOUGH BOY.

ASH.—(*Fraxinus.*)

There are several sorts of this tree, but the ash of the low or swamp lands, and the upland ash, whatever be their varieties, are, perhaps all that are necessary to be particularly mentioned.

The lowland ash splits easily, and is valuable for rails for fences, on account of the durability of the wood. Of the white or upland ash, Mr. Deane observes there are two varieties; one a stiff light durable timber, valuable for making many implements of husbandry; the other which is more tough and strong, grows on high land, but implements made of this wood should be as little exposed to the weather as possible, as it soon rots if it be not kept dry. The season, he says, for felling ash is from November to February; and if cut in any other part of the year the white part of the wood is liable to be more or less injured by worms. The bark of the tree, if carefully taken off at the season when it readily parts from the wood, is of use for making vessels for holding grain, &c. and if felled at this time, and stripped of its bark, it is beleived the wood will be found as durable as if cut at any other time.

From the Massachusetts Agricultural Repository and Journal.

On Indian Corn and its Culture.

Brighton, 29th Dec. 1820.

DEAR SIR,

In an article published in the 4th number of the last volume of the Agricultural Journal, entitled "Remarks on the Agriculture of Massachusetts," the Author, who very ably and satisfactorily points out the advantages of a regular rotation of crops, observes, that "no system is likely to be easily made popular in Massachusetts, from which Indian corn is absolutely excluded."—May not strong reasons be offered, why any system to be generally practised, must embrace that grain as a prominent item of the course? It forms the basis of our bread stuff, and gives deserved reputation to two great staples, *Beef* and *Pork*; without corn you get none of the latter;—and a farmer who has no pork in his tubs, may be considered as fairly on the road to ruin, as a bank with its vaults destitute of *specie*; for it is well known that ruta baga, potatoes or carrots *alone*, will not fatten such pork as our farmers or fishermen have been accustomed to, or that will be found profitable for consumption.

A *Virginian*, in a Treatise* which I have lately perused, remarks, that "even a nation which has lived with *Indian corn* and almost upon it for two hundred years, so far from correctly estimating its value, have only learned to eat it, but not to avail themselves of half its properties." And I trust it will not be deemed superfluous to portray the advantages resulting from its culture, to *New-England men*; when it is considered that the *prejudice* against it, and which will exist against any crop that requires such diligence to obtain, has been fostered, and increased by the few unfavourable seasons preceding the two last—besides, some influential gentlemen, with views highly laudable, have advanced theories, founded on isolated facts, or opinions, tending to discourage the extensive cultivation of this plant.

It is admitted, that on most farms near sea ports, where corn and *manure* can be purchased, the system of potatoe and root culture, to the *exclusion* of corn, may be found profitable; nor would I be understood other than an advocate for such a system, in a regular rotation, upon an extensive scale; but I wish at the same time to hold up to view, the GOLDEN FLEECE found by our *Pilgrim Fathers* on their first landing; and which, had it not existed, or continued with their descendants nearly a century after, the *fair inheritance* we now possess, in the opinion of many sound political economists, could not have been transmitted to us.

Unfortunately we have no precise data, to test a crop of corn with other productions; and in considering its value, must have recourse to general reasonings—to the effects of its extended culture since the settlement of the country, and particularly since the introduction of its pretended *rival* and valuable *auxiliary* the potatoe.

* A series of Agricultural essays, entitled Arator, by Col. John Taylor, of Caroline County, Virginia.—Though adapted to the agriculture of that, and the adjoining states, will be found to contain valuable practical and useful information to the New-England Farmer.

Let us inquire in the first place, what corn-husbandry returns from an acre of land, as usually managed. On suitable soils well tilled and manured, an average crop may be estimated at *forty bushels*, weighing 2400 lbs. of the most nutritious substance to be found in the vegetable kingdom, north of the latitude of the *sugar-cane*—and which can be preserved with ease, for a number of years,—you have the *fodder*, if seasonably and well cured, is, in the opinion of judicious farmers, equal to half a ton of good *hay*—then comes three or four tons of *pumpkins*, should the season favour, fifty or an hundred bushels of *turnips*—and, not unfrequently, a comfortable supply of *white beans!*—No wonder that plenty of the necessaries of life is sure to follow large crops of corn, as effect succeeds cause in any department of physics!

I am aware that it is the general opinion that corn is a very exhausting crop,—much more so than potatoes; but is it correct? has there ever been exhibited the result of a solitary experiment to confirm this opinion? no process in farming admits of greater facility to test a question of this kind—few farmers but have at times, corn and potatoes under similar culture in the same field—has the wheat or barley, the clover or grasses that followed, been more productive on the part occupied by the potatoes, than that by the corn? Experience demonstrates that the *larger the crop of corn, the better the succeeding crop*; this was asserted by Dr. Eliot, the father of New-England husbandry, in his *Essays on Field Husbandry*, published in 1747; at which period it appears, that *oats* usually succeeded corn, and possibly, in some districts, such a murderous course has continued; and it is probable that CORN, after supporting its *allies*, the *pumpkins*, the *beans* and the *turnips*, from the provisions charged to its account, has to answer for the deteriorating effects of oats; the most inimical to grass of any plant that can be named. Moreover, it will be recollected that formerly, the rich alluvial bottoms or intervals were planted with corn, without a particle of manure, for a number of years in succession, till the product was considerably reduced;—would *potatoes* or any *root* crop, with such management, have continued more productive? and hence, has not the reputation of corn materially suffered.

We will next inquire, what return does corn make to the *soil*? I cannot answer so well, as by quoting from *Arator*. "Indian corn may be directly called meal, meadow and manure: it produces more food for man, beast and the earth, than any other farinaceous plant. If the food it produces for the two first was wasted, and men and beasts should thence become poor and perish, ought their poverty or death to be ascribed to the plant which produces the food, or to those who wasted it? Is Indian corn justly chargeable with the impoverishment of the earth, if the food it provides for that is not applied.

"If the theory which supposes that plants extract most or all of their matter from the atmosphere, and that the whole of this matter is manure, be true, then that plant which produces most vegetable offal must be the most improving crop, and it will hardly be denied that Indian corn is entitled to this pre-eminence."

"Let us compare it with wheat. Suppose that the same land will produce as much grain of the one as of the other, which in its use will make equal returns to the earth. Here the equality ends, if, indeed it exists in this point. The corn stalks infinitely exceed the wheat straw in bulk, weight, and a capacity for making food for the earth. If any attentive man who converts both his stalks and straw into manure, will compare their product in April, when he may distinguish one from the other, he will find in the former a vast superiority in quantity. The English farmers consider wheat straw as their most abundant resource for manure, and corn stalks are far more abundant; corn, therefore is less impoverishing, because a more compensating crop to the earth, credited only for its stalks than any in England. In comparing crops, to ascertain their relative product, and operation on the earth, we must contrast farinaceous crops with each other; and consider the litter or offal they produce, not as wasted, but as judiciously applied to the compensation of the land. At the threshold of the comparison, corn exhibits a return from the same land of more offal, or litter, in its stalks alone, than wheat does altogether. But to the stalks of corn, its blades, tops, husks, and cobs, remain to be added, each of which will nearly balance the litter bestowed on the land by wheat." The author concludes his encomium upon Indian corn, with observing, that "as a fallow crop, it is unrivalled, if, as fallow crops ought constantly to do, it receives the manure."

Arthur Young, who has given such an impetus to rural economy, and to root culture particularly, in Great-Britain; in his travels through France in 1789, makes the following remarks respecting Indian corn. "The line of maize (corn) may be said to be the division between the good husbandry of the south, and the bad husbandry of the north of the kingdom; till you meet with maize very rich soils are fallowed, but never after; perhaps it is the most important plant that can be introduced into the agriculture of any country whose climate will suit it. The only good husbandry in the kingdom, (some small rich districts excepted) arises from the possession and management of the plant. For the inhabitants of a country to live upon that *plant*, which is the preparation for wheat, and at the same time keep their cattle fat upon the leaves of it, is to possess a treasure, for which they are indebted to their climate." "Planted in squares or rows so far asunder, that all imaginable tillage may be given between them; and the ground thus cleaned and prepared at the will of the farmer, is an invaluable circumstance; and finally it is succeeded by wheat. Thus a country, whose soil and climate admit the course of—1st. maize, 2d. wheat, is under a cultivation that, perhaps, yields the most food for man and beast, that is possible to be drawn from the land."

This celebrated agriculturist, a few years after his return from his travels, met with a native of *Connecticut* in London, and on being informed of the face of the soil and population of that state to a square mile, observed, "they must consume all, or more than they raise!" but when told that a large surplus was exported, expressed his astonishment; and eagerly inquired "what is their principal culture?" The reply was, "*Indian corn.*" He immediately remarked, "that accounts for the wonder." The culture of corn

still enters largely into the agricultural system of Connecticut, and what is the consequence? Let one of her most revered* poets answer:

Fell Famine sickens at the o'erflowing good,
And, hissing, flies the native land of food.

A general failure of the crops of corn in New-England, cannot be traced to more than four seasons since its first settlement, and those occasioned principally by autumnal frosts, and owing, in some measure, perhaps, by an improper choice of soils. The last failure (1816) might in a great degree have been prevented, had proper attention been paid to this circumstance; and also to the selection of *early varieties for seed*, as it is a fact, that there are very productive varieties in the country, which, if planted the first of June, will be secure from frost the first of September!

The mode of culture generally in Massachusetts, does not differ essentially, from that taught our ancestors by the aborigines; warm soils were chosen—an *alewife* or some other *fish*, was put into the ground with the seed, and as the Squaws had no other implement than a *clam-shell*, hills were formed with the earth that could be most easily obtained; and hills have been the order to the present time. Is it not probable that, unincumbered with stumps and rocks as a great portion of the arable lands of the state now are, and with the vast acquisition of implements, that a different process would produce much greater crops, with less labour? We have seen by publications, under the sanction of respectable societies in the western parts of the state of New-York, that on *ridges* or in *rows*, more than one hundred and twenty bushels of corn have been obtained from an acre! three times the quantity we estimate as an average crop! It is true that our soils cannot boast the fertility of that new region; but it is also as true, that our farmers will not yield to any for enterprize and perseverance.

The introduction of that *magic substance*, gypsum or plaster, which exhibits such astonishing effects upon corn, and is obtained almost as cheap as sand from the sea beach, has begun to form a new era in the husbandry of the state; may we not presume, that by the aid of this substance mixed with manures, in their raw state, and also applied as top dressings of the plants at every time of hoeing, till six or eight bushels are expended to an acre, instead of one or two, as is usual, that the most encouraging results may be expected? The utility of plaster, has been tested in almost every town in the state, situated 15 or 20 miles from the sea board.—The invention of machines for its more easy pulverization, and so cheap, as to be within the reach of any considerable farmer, is a desideratum.

The perfect culture and copious manuring demanded by corn, may be said to be the principal objection to its more extensive cultivation; ought not this to be the very feature which should recommend it? Has not the drill husbandry been the means of exalting BRITISH AGRICULTURE beyond that of any other country? and what is a well managed field of Indian corn, but a most complete drill system? The depth the roots will penetrate, if encouraged, and from the structure, and volume of the stalk and foliage presented to the atmosphere, it seems peculiarly adapted to resist the severe droughts of our climate; its superiority in this respect over any other crop we cultivate, I believe will not be questioned. And, if the agriculture of New-England has heretofore been entitled to any pre-eminence, compared with that of other sections of the union, the cause may be attributed partly, perhaps, to the more general use of *ox teams*, but principally to this thorough tillage required by the soil and climate,—and for which the most grateful returns are made.

On the whole, the conclusion, to my mind, is irresistible, that should Indian corn be made the basis of an extensive rotation system, with a pointed attention to the manures, which it has the capacity to increase in a compound ratio, the agriculture of our country may not only approximate to that of Great Britain, but with the energies such a system might be expected to elicit, equal it.

The eulogist of Indian corn, whose method of cultivation differs from that of his neighbours, may be expected to submit some account of it; and I feel less reluctant to the task, since I find a mode very similar, and with corresponding views, has been practised and recommended by such an accompli-hed cultivator, and physiologist, as Col. Taylor, the author of the treatise before referred to, It may be proper to state, that I was induced to adopt this method from the following occurrence. Having a large bed of *beets* planted in narrow rows or drills, in the usual way, and a severe drought ensuing, the leaves were observed, in the middle of the day to wilt and fall down, in all but the out-side rows, which remained erect and flourishing; and when the crop was taken up, were nearly double the size of those from the centre of the bed! That a greater exposure to the atmosphere, was the principal cause could not be doubted; and the idea immediately presented, that if they had been cultivated on *ridges* so far apart as to permit a plough to pass, it would in effect, be making the whole crop *out side-rows*: and for upwards of fifteen years since, most of the tillage crops upon my farm have been cultivated on ridges with manifest advantage,—as to product, labour, and the *unquestionable* improvement of the soil. The ridges of beets, carrots, parsnips, turnips and ruta baga, are about two feet, cabbages four, and corn and potatoes five feet and an half apart. The particular mode of cultivating carrots was communicated to the Hon. Mr. Quincy in 1811, and included in an article on the *field culture of carrots*, furnished by him and published in No. 1. of the 4th Vol. of the Massachusetts Agricultural Journal, a mode practised by that gentleman with such success, that his neighbours who have large *milk establishments*, have been induced to adopt the extensive culture of this root, so valuable for their cows, and which, some of them have informed me, they should have been deterred from attempting in the common method, from the expense and uncertainty.

But to return to the culture of corn; in describing which, that of potatoes must necessarily be embraced; as I deem it a species of *heresy* for two crops to succeed each other when it can well be avoided; nevertheless, as potatoes should be employed as the *pioneers* of a farm, and it is frequently the case that cold, moist, or rough soils, not suitable for corn, are found, sufficient to be occupied by as many potatoes as the farmer can well manage, or may want; under such circumstance, the permitting two crops of corn to follow, *on ridges*, may be justifiable.

If we begin the system with *sward* land, it is broken up in the autumn; harrowed fine in the spring, and light furrows run out five feet and an half apart:* into these furrows, potatoes are dropped from six to eight inches asunder, according to size, the carts follow and cover them with manure; a furrow is then turned from each side so as to meet over the manure, a little labour with the hoe may be required, to make all level and complete the planting; other furrows are turned up, and at the first hoeing the baulk is cleared and the ridge completed. In the subsequent culture the plough approaches only the sides of the ridges, and continues deepening the furrow between them. The following spring, the ridges are reversed and placed directly over those deep furrows. The manure is turned in while the ridges are forming, or by opening a furrow on the top, to receive it, with a pair of oxen walking on each side, covered with hoes and the corn planted. If the land is in good heart, and manure abundant, the kernels may be six inches apart, or as many dropped together as to insure four stalks to remain two feet apart, in which case the manure is deposited conformably; either method will give the same number of plants to the acre; I think four stalks together afford support to each other against winds, and are not so apt to send up suckers as when single, and there may be some advantage by concentrating the manure, in forwarding the young plants during the cold seasons which we frequently have in June; still I have not had sufficient experience to determine which method is preferable; if the land is *stony*, the last will be found most convenient. As soon as the plants appear, the earth is stirred about them with the hand, and ashes at the same time strewed on, in the proportion of a handful to four plants, (my land being near the sea, plaster has no effect,) the cultivation proceeds similar to that described for the potatoes—the ploughing continues as often and as long as you please, without disturbing the roots of the corn, or breaking it down, deepening the soil and turning up the dead earth to the sides of the ridges, which checks the growth of weeds greatly; and if the crop is at first thoroughly hand weeded, they will give but little trouble afterwards.

It has not been in my power to make a comparison with a crop cultivated in the common method, but I have had several foremen since ridging has been practised on the farm, who were at first prejudiced against it, but were soon convinced of its utility; and none of them have estimated the increase of product, with the same quantity of manure, at less than one fifth, and the saving of labour full as much.

It is probable that on rich soils with plenty of manure, largar crops may be obtained by making

* The late President Dwight.

* Should the staple of the soil be thus the ridges may be 6 or even 8 feet apart, a few additional *gathering* furrows only being required; and to make up for *loss of space*, one or two rows *more* may be planted on the brouse of the ridge, if sufficiently rich.

the ridges much nearer, but the labour will be more, and the advantage of uncommon deep culture, without extra expense, must be abandoned; the importance of such culture to the succeeding crops, may be illustrated by the following relation.

About fifteen months since, I was applied to, severally, by two respectable farmers, from an adjoining town, who are considered as judicious and as *thrifty*, as any in the county of Norfolk, to be informed how I had managed a piece of land, the former state of which they had well known, to make it produce such a *second* crop of clover, in such a season of drouth, that theirs was *dried up*, and on land naturally more moist, which they considered stronger, and had been well cultivated and highly manured? They were told in reply, that "the land was under the sixth course of a rotation.—viz. 1, potatoes; 2, corn; 3, carrots and beets; 4, corn, over ridges; 5, spring wheat, of which it carried 30 bushels to 59 lb. 6, clover, first crop two tons and a half, second the same season, and which had attracted their notice, about one ton to the acre." That it had from 16 to 20 lb. of clover, and half a bushel of herds-grass (timothy) seed to an acre; one half ploughed in with the wheat, and the remainder sown on the furrow, harrowed in and well rolled: and further, that no stock were suffered to graze upon it." It should also be stated, that a heavy crop of herds-grass was produced the last season, and that it gives promise of another; that the soil is a deep sandy loam, known to many farmers by the name of *fox coloured earth*, and which some of them are too fearful of turning up; that when first cultivated, in the common method, which was some years previous to the present rotation, it did not shew two inches of brown soil or vegetable mould, and had been considered as poor pasture. And I would observe, that had the land been longer under previous cultivation, the 3d and 4th courses might have been omitted, and the rotation thereby shortened two years.

I will close this communication, now much longer than was intended, by mentioning that I have found the following preparation of SEED-CORN, effectual in protecting it against squirrels, and other vermin. Take equal parts of tar and train oil, simmer them together, and turn over the corn; then sift on ashes, lime, or plaster, stirring it, till each kernel has taken up as much as will permit its being conveniently handled.

It is probable that *walnuts, acorns, chesnuts*, &c. thus prepared, would be protected; the destruction of which by squirrels, field mice, &c. has very much retarded plantations of those valuable trees.

I remain, dear sir,

respectfully and cordially, yours,

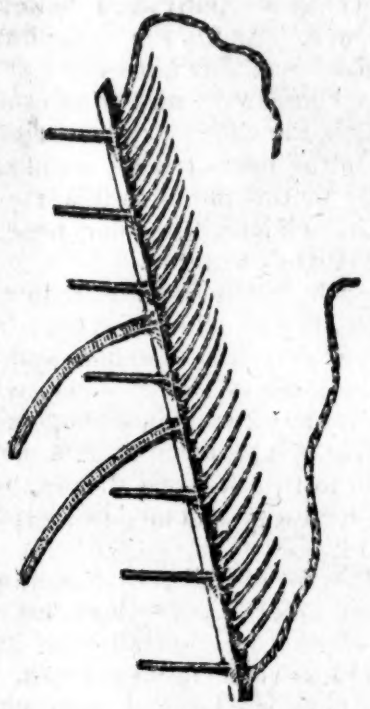
S. W. POMEROY.

JOHN LOWELL, Esq.

Corresponding Secretary of the Massachusetts Society for promoting Agriculture.

On the Utility of Horse Rakes.

[BY ROBERTS VAUX, ESQ.]



BIRWOOD Lode, 8mo. 8, 1816.

To Richard Peters, Esq. President, and the Members of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture.

In one of my late letters to the President, I promised to furnish the society with some facts concerning the utility of the *horse rake*, now in general use by the farmers of this neighbourhood. This valuable implement is of such simple construction, that those who are the least expert with tools, might supply themselves with it. It is composed of a piece of scantling 3 by 3 inches, 10 feet long, into which 25 teeth 18 inches long, and 4 inches apart, are inserted horizontally; 8 pins 24 inches in length are driven perpendicularly into the scantling, and there are also attached to it, two handles of similar form as those of a plough.* The horse is connected by a chain to each end. The cost of materials to make a rake of this description, would not exceed two dollars, and I presume any carpenter, or wheelwright, could afford them complete, for four, or five dollars, each. Some farmers employ them for raking hay into winrow. But although it is an expeditious mode, *the hand-rake is more cleanly.* This instrument is most important in the grain field after the harvest is off. It not only combs the stubble, and gives the grass a much better opportunity to grow, but it saves an astonishing quantity of grain. The subjoined statements obtained from persons of respectability, who thus glean their fields, are sufficient to establish the reputation of the *horse-rake*, and ought to recommend it to universal adoption.

Be assured of my respect,

ROBERTS VAUX.

* The Rake presented to the Society sometime since, and now in the room where it meets; if my memory is correct, was brought from Long-Island. It is inconveniently large, and clumsy. A rake of the dimensions I have given, is found by experience to answer the best purpose.

R. V.

Foreign Agricultural, and Scientific Notices.

From arrangements which we have made with a correspondent at New-York, we expect, in future, to be able to add to the interest and value of *The Plough Boy*, by the publication of such notices as to agriculture and science, as may appear in the English or other foreign journals, on their arrival in this country. The following articles are from London papers to the 31st January, received at New-York by the packet ship Albion.

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The Agricultural Associations are again moving in the direction of last year's exertions. We sincerely hope that such pursuits, and such objects of national excellence—such important interests (with the obligations that are laid upon them) will be found, upon due consideration, to be as deserving of legislative protection as silks and broadcloths; we do not speak invidiously, but make our appeal to the sum total of English justice, candour, and impartiality.

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Extraordinary fact.—Mr. Chamberlin, of Cropedylawn, Berks, had a cow, which, during the last spring, declined yielding her usual quantity of milk, and during the summer appeared to suffer from inward pain. She became dry last Michaelmas, and a few weeks since refused every sort of food; upon which Mr. Chamberlin had her killed, and on opening the animal, a small *awl blade*, such as is used by shoemakers, about two inches and a half long, was found in the heart, from which it projected about half an inch. From the corrupted state of part of the heart, and the part immediately opposite the projection, the awl must have been there a considerable time. It is not considered wonderful that the animal should have swallowed such a substance in its hay or other food, but it is deemed very extraordinary that it should have reached the heart, and remained fixed, as it had been, for so long a time.

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The potatoe crop in Ireland has this year proved most abundant and excellent.—The Minden East Indiaman, built ten years ago of teak wood, was, on inspection, found to be wholly free from decay, or symptom of dry-rot.

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Five valuable horses died, in the neighbourhood of London, in consequence of eating wheat mixed with straw.

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Butcher's Meat.—A correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*, in a letter to the editor, dated 7th Dec. writes as follows:

"Although the price of sheep and cattle is reduced to nearly one half what it was two years ago, the London butchers nevertheless continue to demand their former extravagant rates. I am now paying for meat precisely what I gave five years ago, and which is for beef and mutton 9d. per pound; for veal, 10d. to 11d.; and for rump steaks and veal cutlets, 14d. per pound.

Mr. Lawrence has lately published, in the Farmer's Journal, the following curious document respecting the neglect of pig-breeding in the country, and our dependance on Ireland for the supply of pork and bacon :

In 1780—Eleven malt distilleries, four starch houses, and sundry offal feeders in and near the metropolis, fattened 30,000 hogs, which produced the average price of 2s 9d per stone.

In 1820—Six malt distilleries fed about 190 hogs, their wash and grains sold to cowkeepers and others. (The starch houses may perhaps feed about 1,000 hogs.)

In 1780—Three thousand store pigs from the north western counties, were purchased at Finchley, at from 18s. to 24s. each, for the use of the Essex farmers, to be fed on the clovers, whence they were returned in the autumn to the London markets, and sold upon the average, at from 50s. to 63s. For some years past this practice has been entirely discontinued.

In 1780, and annually about that period—35,000 store pigs were driven from Shropshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, the Midland Counties, Yorkshire, Berkshire, &c. to Finchley market. For some years past, those counties have not sent more than 3000.

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At the western extremity of the island of Lismore are some rocks separated at low water, where the cattle may be daily observed resorting ; quitting the fertile pastures to feed on sea weed.—It has erroneously been supposed that this practice as well as the eating of fish was the result of hunger. It appears, on the contrary, to be the effect of choice, in cattle as well as sheep that have once found access to this diet.—The accuracy with which they attended to the diurnal variations of the tide is very remarkable ; calculating the times of the ebb with such nicety, that they are seldom mistaken even when they have some miles to walk to the beach. In the same way they always secure their retreat from these chosen spots in such a manner as never to be suprised and drowned by the returning tide. With respect to fish, it is equally certain that they often prefer it to their best pastures. It is not less remarkable that the horses of Shetland, eat fish from choice, and that the dogs brought up on these shores continue to prefer it to all diet, even after a long absence. The feeding of cattle with fish is a practice well known in Canada.

THE PLOUGH BOY.

ALBANY : SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1821.

AGRICULTURAL CIRCULAR.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE,
Albany, Feb. 21, 1821.

To the Presidents and Corresponding Secretaries of the several Agricultural Societies in the state of New-York.

GENTLEMEN,

The Board of Agriculture, in conformity to the intentions of the Legislature, in passing the Act of April 7th, 1819, for the improvement of Agriculture in the state, have imported from Europe, thirteen tierces of seeds, of various kinds, including varieties of each kind.

In the spring of 1820, the Board had at its disposal, a quantity of seeds, very small indeed, when compared with the quantity above mentioned, and which the domestic corresponding secretary was required to distribute to the Societies. In this operation considerable labour was necessary, and the officers of the respective societies, and gentlemen then in the Legislature, were requested to co operate in transporting the seeds to the county societies, with a view to economy in expense, as well as safety of conveyance. Several of the gentlemen applied to, were prompt in offering the necessary aid ; but in the event, a portion of the seeds remained undistributed.

The seeds now to be distributed, have been apportioned, under the direction and superintendance of the General Executive committee ; and will be ready for delivery in the course of the next week at farthest, at the office of the Board, over the bookstore of Mr. Backus in State-street. On the score of labour, in this, and all other matters connected with the business of the board, it is to be remarked that the Executive committee, and the officers of the Board, perform all their duties gratuitously. You will therefore perceive, gentlemen, the propriety of resorting to any opportunity that may present itself of calling or sending for the seeds which have been apportioned to your respective societies.

Catalogues of the different kinds of seeds will be furnished, with brief statements of the best modes of cultivation, the best soil adapted to each, &c.

As the season for sowing and planting is rapidly approaching, no time ought to be lost in attending to this notice.

The editors throughout the state are respectfully requested to give this notice a place in their columns, with as little delay as possible ; their well known patriotism is relied upon for a prompt compliance with this request.

By order, S. SOUTHWICK, Secr'y.

Top Dressing of Nitre.

An obliging correspondent in New-York, sent us, by one of the mails of last week, the London *Farmers' Journal*, of Dec. 18, 1820, from which we copy the following interesting letter of Sir *John Sinclair*, to whom the agricultural interest of Europe and America is under so many obligations for the uniform zeal, industry, and success with which he has applied his talents to the improvement of husbandry and rural affairs.

FROM THE LONDON FARMERS' JOURNAL.

SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, *on the application of Nitre as a Top-dressing to crops in Spring.*

George-street, Edinburgh, Dec. 1, 1820.

SIR.—I have observed in your Journal some communications from Mr. Wigful, sen, of Sheffield, respecting the application of nitre to crops of wheat, and the astonishing effects with which it was attended. I have ever been of opinion that such hints should not be despised or ridiculed ; for the processes of nature, in the vegetation of plants, are so extremely mysterious, that it is impossible to discover what may, or what may not, be favourable to their production.—What can be more absurd than the idea of taking a piece of limestone, burning it, throwing water upon it, and expecting that the white powder, into which it was thus resolved, would be of use to vegetation ? What can be more incredible than the effects of a small quantity of gypsum, or of Dutch ashes, on clover ? or the utility of steeps for the *prevention* of smut ? I thought it right, therefore, to make further enquiries into the experiments that had been made in the neighbourhood of Sheffield, and to transmit to you the information I might receive, for the information of the public.

It may be proper to inform you, that I have heard, not only from Mr Wigfull, but from his friend the Quaker, by whom the experiments have been tried. The latter informs me, that the plan was originally recommended to him by a druggist in the neighbourhood. That he first tried it by mixing seven pounds of nitre with a bushel of fine earth, and having filled a garden pot with that mixture, he sowed it with white mustard seed, and put it in a hot-house in the spring. The result being very satisfactory, he was soon convinced that the mixture was congenial to vegetation. He afterwards tried it on beds of vegetables in his garden, and found it still to answer. He was thence induced to try it on wheat. The soil was a good hazel earth, and was manured for the first crop ; but for the last crop, though the 4th in succession, nothing but nitre was made use of ; and the produce is calculated to be at the rate of forty bushels per acre. It had not been threshed when the letter to me was written. The application was made by mixing twenty-one pounds of powdered nitre to three bushels of good earth, for each acre sown with wheat. On spring sown grain, he would apply the mixture as soon as the crop makes its appearance above ground. The expesne is trifling as rough nitre costs only 34s. per cwt.

The Quaker informs me that a gentlemen farmer of property and credit, tried it on his recommendation, both on wheat and flax, sowing a part, and leaving the rest without any of the mixture had been applied. In short, the assertion of Banister, in his Synopsis of Husbandry, p. 40, "that nitre is the *primum mobile* of vegetation," was completely verified.

It may be proper to add, that Doctor Horne found that nitre, *in small quantities*, promoted vegetation *considerably*.

I shall certainly try some experiments myself with this mixture in the course of next spring : and I hope that some of your public-spirited readers will follow the same plan in other parts of the country, that the question may be put at rest.

I remain, Sir, your very obedient servant,
JOHN SINCLAIR.

N. B. Mr. Wigfull is of opinion, if twenty-four bushels of the kiln-dried oats (called *shudes* in Yorkshire,) or the same quantity of very dry saw-dust, or any other substance that would absorb a large quantity of moisture, were steeped for some days in putrid urine, and then mixed with eight bushels of soot, or of wood ashes, and spread on the young turnips as they appear above ground, that it would have the good effect of preserving them from the ravages of the fly, as insects of that sort cannot bear putrid smells.

FROM BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

Literary and Scientific Intelligence.

New Voyage of Discovery.—Advices from St. Petersburgh, dated March 22, state, that a new voyage of discovery will be undertaken this summer [1820] in the north. The expedition will sail from the mouth of the Lena for the Frozen Ocean, in order to examine the coast of Siberia and the islands which were discovered to the north of it some years ago. As it is not yet ascertained whether the supposed islands may in reality be one main land or not, and as hitherto they have only been visited in winter, it will be interesting to know how far the ice will permit vessels to advance during summer, and to determine its extent.

Ancient Navigation.—A discovery was recently made in the environs of the Cape of Good Hope, which is highly interesting to history. While digging a cave, the workmen found the hull of an ancient vessel constructed of cedar, which is believed to be the remains of a Phœnician galley. If this appropriation be just, there is no longer room to doubt that the bold navigators of Tyre had reached the south point of Africa: and if they actually gained that point, we may infer that they navigated also the eastern ocean.

Indian Wild Ass.—Gen. Sir D. Ochterlony lately despatched, as a present from the Nawab of Bhawulpoor to Governor-general the Marquis of Hastings, a beautiful wild ass, of that species called by the natives *Gor Khur*. This elegant creature is described as being eleven or twelve hands high, of a beautiful light fawn or cream colour, with long ears, and large black eyes. In disposition it is untractable, and in this, as well as in every other respect, excepting the colour, resembles the zebra. It is said to be a complete model of strength, beauty, and agility.—*Asiatic Mirror.*

Straw Ropes Conductors of Electricity.—M. M. Capestolle, a French professor of chemistry, affirms, that a rope of straw will form an excellent conductor for lightning, and supply the place of metallic conductors.

Comets.—It has been ascertained that one and the same comet returned to our system in 1736, 1795, 1801, 1805, and 1818—19. It appears never to range beyond the orbit of Jupiter. Its short period of little more than three years and a quarter, and its mean distance from the sun, which is not much greater than twice that of the earth. It crosses the orbit of the earth more than 60 times in a century.

North American Hot Springs.—The Hot Springs of Ouachitta, which have been known for many years, are situated on a stream called Hot-spring Creek, which falls into the Washitaw river, eight miles below. They lie fifty miles south of the Arkansaw river, in Clark county, territory of Arkansaw, (lately Missouri,) and six miles west of the road from Cadron to Mount Prairie on Red River.—The approach to the spring lies up the valley of the creek. On the right of the valley rises the hot mountain, with the springs issuing at its foot; on the left, the cold mountain, which is little more than a confused and mighty pile of stones. The hot mountain is about 300 feet high, rising quite steep, and presenting occasionally ledges of rocks; it terminates above in a confused mass of broken rocks. The steep and otherwise sterile sides are covered with a luxuriant growth of vines. The valley between this and the cold mountain is about fifty yards wide. The springs issue at the foot of the hot mountain at an elevation of about ten feet above the level of the creek; they are very numerous all along the hill-side, and the water, which runs in copious streams, is quite hot; it will scald the hand and boil an egg hard in ten minutes. Its temperature is considered that of boiling water, but Dr. Andrews, of Red River, thinks it is not above 200 deg. Fahr.

Discovery of a new Island off Cape Horn.—Buenos Ayres, Jan. 7.—A new island has been discovered off Cape Horn, in lat. 61 deg. long. 55 deg by the ship William, on a voyage from Monte Video for Valparaiso. The same ship having been despatched by Capt. Sherriff, of the Andromache frigate, to survey the coast, had explored it for 200 miles. The captain went ashore, found it covered with snow, and uninhabited. Abundance of seals and whales were found in its neighbourhood. He has named the island *New Shetland.*

Opinions in regard to British Metaphysicians, by the Germans.—At the last Leipsig fair, many new works on Moral Philosophy and Metaphysics made their appearance. A hasty glance of several of these, enabled us to understand the general opinion entertained in Germany of the metaphysicians in Great-Britain. Reid, they say, did little; Dugald Srewart is not an original writer, but eminently distinguished by the beauty and grace of his style. Gregory, the physician, ingenious, but not original. Thomas Brown, a man of great promise as a bold and original thinkar, and brings forcibly to recollection the period of the deep thinking Hume. Darwin a visionary. Paley an amiable but superficial writer. Playfair the mathematician, a writer of powerful metaphysical articles in the Edinburgh Review.

University Text-Books.—In Germany, France, Italy, Sweden, and Denmark, it is an invariable practice with the professors in the different Universities, to publish, for the use of their pupils, text-books of their courses of lectures.—The universality of the practice, is a decisive proof of its utility. We have been always surprised to find this accommodation for students so little regarded in our Scotch Colleges; although, in the few cases where it has been adopted, the greatest benefit has resulted. All of us remember with delight, the pleasure and advantage we derived from the excellent Text-books of Dr. Walker, Professor Frazer Tytler, Professor Dugald Stewart, and Professor Playfair; and many now pursuing their studies in the University of Edinburgh, anticipated, from the lately published admirable Text-book of Dr. Brown, important assistance in the difficult and abstruse studies of Moral Philosophy and Metaphysics. The want of Text-books is particularly felt in the classes of Logic, Medical Jurisprudence, Natural History, Practice of Medicine, Theory of Medicine, and Materia Medica.

Variation of the Magnetic Needle.—In a former volume of this Magazine, we mentioned that the excellent observations of Colonel Marn Beaufoy, made at Bushy-Heath, near Stanmore, in Middlesex, had shown that the magnetic variation to the westward of the true north had uniformly increased, on taking the means monthly, until the beginning of the last year, after which it had fluctuated, but giving a mean variation of 24 deg. 37 min. in the first three months of 1819. The observations since published by the Colonel in a contemporary Journal, seem to show that this was *the maximum variation*, occurring in February or March, 1819: because he finds the monthly means, since the beginning of April of that year, to have uniformly decreased. It further appears, from the Colonel's statements, that the western variation had been on the increase through 162 years, or since 1657: it was only 77 years before this period that the first authentic observations on the variation can be found, or in 1580, when the needle at London varied to the east 11 deg. 15 min.

EXTRACT.

"*Avarice* begets more vices than Priam did children, and like Priam *survives* them all. It starves its keeper to surfeit those who wish him dead; and makes him submit to more mortifications to lose heaven, than the martyr undergoes to gain it. Avarice is a passion full of paradox, a madness full of method; for although the miser is the most mercenary of all beings, yet he serves the worst master more faithfully than some Christians do the best, and will take nothing for it. He falls down and worships the god of this world, but will have neither its pomps, its vanities, nor its pleasures for his trouble. He begins to accumulate treasure as a *mean* to happiness, and by a common but morbid association, he continues to accumulate it as an *end*. He lives poor, to die rich, and is the mere jailor of his house, and the turnkey of his wealth. Impoverished by his gold, he slaves harder to imprison it in his chest, than his brother slave to liberate it from the mine. The avarice of the miser may be termed the grand sepulchre of all his other passions, as they successively decay. But unlike other tombs, it is enlarged by *repletion*, and strengthened by *age*. This latter paradox, so peculiar to this passion, must be ascribed to that love of power so inseparable from the human mind. There are three kinds of power—wealth, strength, and talent; but as old age always weakens, and often destroys the two latter, the aged are induced to cling with the greater avidity to the former. And the attachment of the aged to wealth, *must* be a growing and a progressive attachment, since such are not slow in discovering that those same ruthless years which detract so sensibly from the strength of their bodies, and of their minds, serve only to augment and to consolidate the strength of their purse."

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☞ Persons calling for the following Letters, will please to mention that they are advertised.

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